



# News Release

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## **CALIFORNIA'S 15-YEAR-OLD TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM KEEPS PROMISE TO CALIFORNIA VOTERS** *New Data Confirm Aggressive Program Works*

SACRAMENTO - Fifteen years after California launched its tobacco control program and 10 years after passage of an unprecedented statewide smoke-free workplace law, new data released today show that smoking among youth continues to decline and that Californians approve of the state's smoke-free efforts.

State health officials and public health advocates joined Sacramento middle-school students, members of the first generation to benefit from California's tobacco-free policies, to celebrate the success of Proposition 99, the landmark Tobacco Tax and Health Protection Act of 1988, and California's smoke-free workplace law that took effect in 1995.

"California's youth have grown up enjoying the benefits of living in America's smoke-free zone," said Kim Belshé, secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency. "Today we celebrate 15 years of reducing adult and youth smoking, exposure to secondhand smoke and tobacco-related diseases and deaths."

New figures show that smoking among California youth has decreased to record lows. According to the 2004 California Student Tobacco Survey released today by the California Department of Health Services (CDHS), 13.2 percent of high school students in California smoked last year, compared with 16.0 percent in 2002 and 21.6 in 2000.

Among middle school students in grades six through eight, 3.9 percent reported smoking last year, compared with 4.4 percent in 2002 and 6.7 in 2000.

"With aggressive tobacco education and prevention activities, we have taught our youth to be more aware of the tobacco industry's marketing tactics and to reject tobacco," said CDHS Director Sandra Shewry.

In addition to new data on youth smoking, CDHS also released results from a new Field Research poll, which shows that the state's smoke-free workplace law has had a major impact on smoking behavior and cessation efforts and that the majority of Californians support the law.

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According to the 2004 Field Research poll:

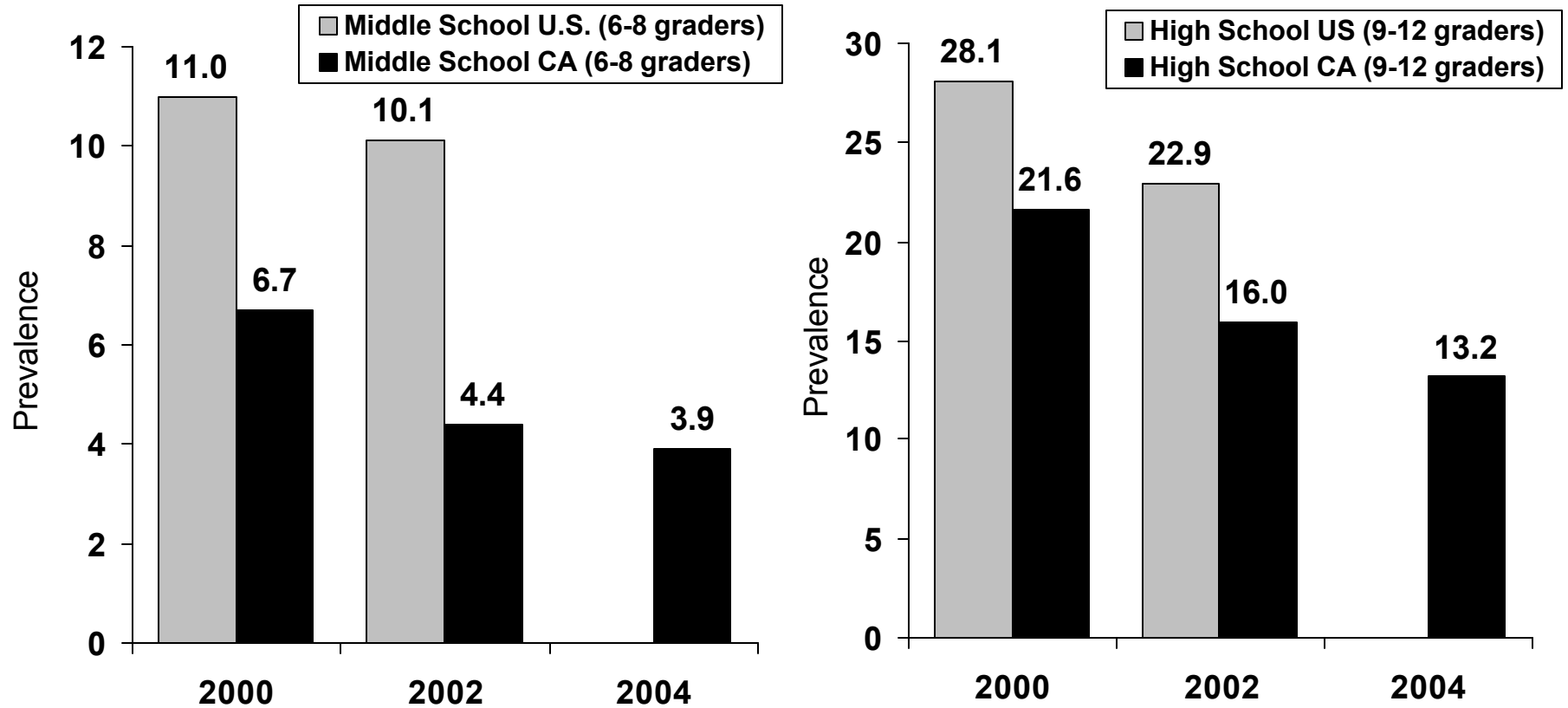
- Fifty-two percent of former smokers who quit in the past 10 years said that having smoke-free public places made it easier for them to quit smoking.
- Sixty-nine percent of current smokers who attempted to quit in the past 10 years said that smoke-free public places helped them reduce the number of cigarettes they smoke.
- Ninety percent of Californians surveyed, including the majority of smokers, said they approve of the smoke-free workplace law.
- People who moved to the state after the law went into effect also overwhelmingly support the smoke-free workplace law. Ninety-three percent said they approve of the law and 91 percent said they would recommend that other communities adopt a similar smoke-free policy.
- Seventy-four percent of Californians surveyed, including nearly half of those who were smokers, agreed that smoking should be prohibited in the outdoor dining areas of restaurants.

"California's smoke-free policies are helping to protect people from the dangers of secondhand smoke," said State Public Health Officer Dr. Richard J. Jackson. "The latest Field Research poll provides evidence that these policies also help smokers quit their deadly addiction."

Belshé added, "Californians can be proud of how far we've come in the last 15 years, but should also remember that the battle against tobacco addiction continues. There are currently four million adult smokers in California. With rising health care costs, preventive health programs are vital to the state's efforts to ensure a healthy and prosperous California."

In November 1988, Proposition 99 was approved by California voters and instituted a 25-cent tax on cigarettes and earmarked 5 cents of every cigarette pack sold to fund the California Tobacco Control Program, the nation's longest running and most emulated comprehensive anti-tobacco program.

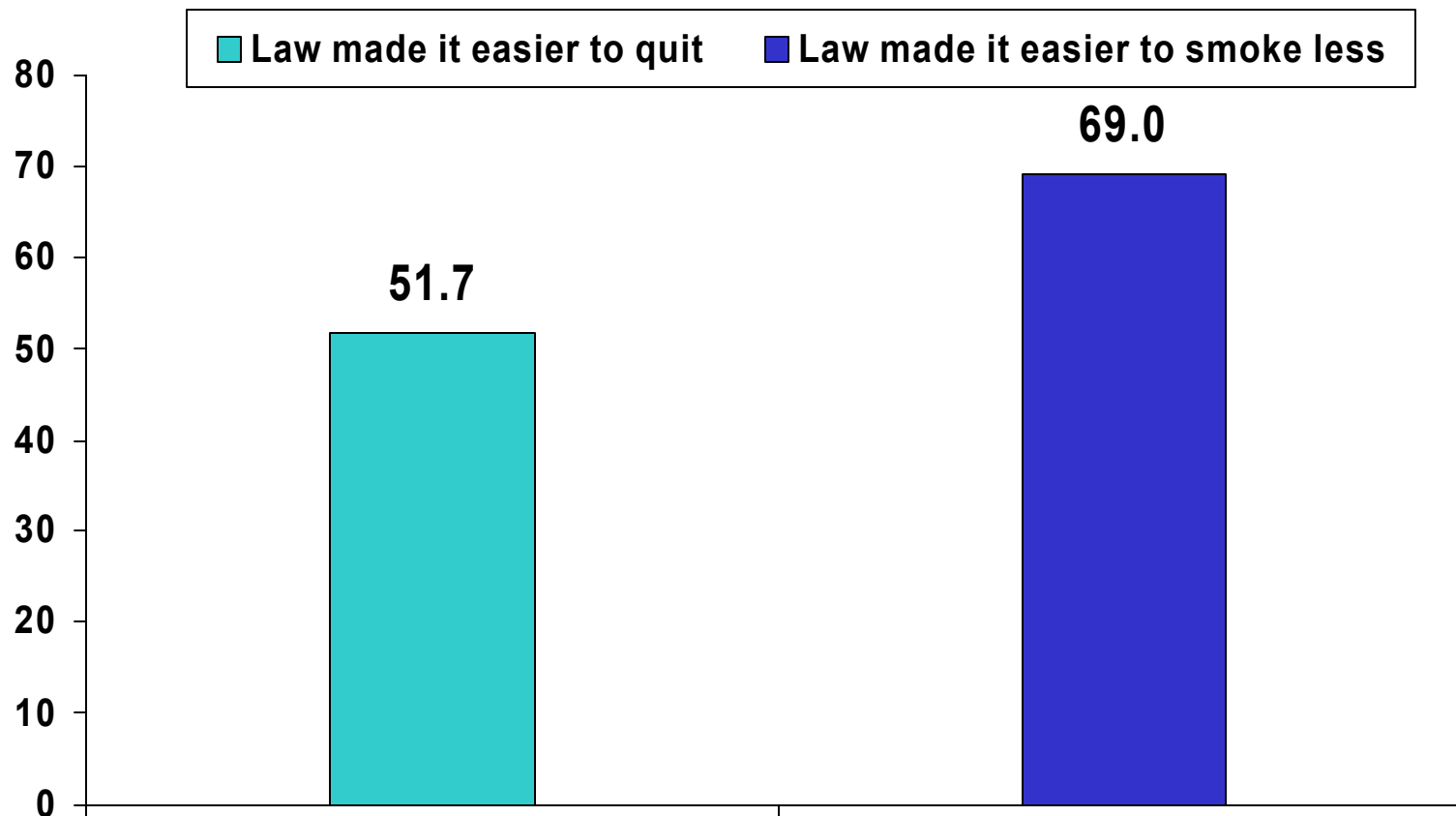
## 30-day smoking prevalence for California and U.S. middle school (6th-8th grade) and high school (9th-12th grade) students, 2000-2004



Source: The 2000 data are from the National Youth Tobacco Survey collected by the American Legacy Foundation, which used passive parental consent. The 2002 and 2004 data are from the California Student Tobacco Survey, which used active parental consent. Note that the 2004 U.S. data are currently unavailable. Prepared by: California Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section, October 2004.



## Former smokers/smokers in 2004 who agreed smoke-free workplace law made it easier to quit or smoke less



Source: The 2004 Survey of California Adults on Secondhand Smoke conducted by Field Research Corporation.  
Prepared by: California Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section, January 2005.